

600
*The Religious Improvement of
publick Events:*

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd at

BERRY-STREET,
June 18. 1727.

On Occasion of the DEATH of

Our late GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN

GEORGE I.

And the peaceful SUCCESSION of

His present M A J E S T Y
GEORGE II.

By *I. WATTS.*

THE SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N :

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Sarah Harris

T H E
P R E F A C E.

WHEN I had just delivered this plain Sermon from the Pulpit, it was a great Surprize to me to find my self surrounded with Importunities to make it more publick. Nor can I impute this to any thing but to the affectionate Zeal and Concern of my Auditors about all Events that relate to the Royal House of Great Britain, and to a Mind well prepar'd by the late important Occurrences to receive Instructions of Piety from a common Discourse without Art or Ornament.

I must acknowledge, that when any great and momentous Changes arise in the World, it is my Custom in the course of my Ministry to excite my Hearers to a pious Notice and Improvement of them. And when upon the Death of our late gracious Sovereign, I observed among my Acquaintance so just and sincere a Joy for the peaceful Succession of a Protestant Prince to the British Throne, I was desirous to turn the Stream of it into a religious Channel, and to awaken their Thoughts to a more solemn and distinct observation of the Hand of God, both in putting a sudden period to the Reign of one excellent King, and the immediate advancement of another: But I have always had an aversion to send any of these Composures to the Press. I know several of my Bre-

The PREFACE.

thren are much better qualify'd for such Services; And after almost 30 Years spent in the Ministry I have never yet published one Sermon on such Political Occasions.

But the requests of many Persons multiply'd so fast upon me at this time, that I found my self constrain'd to submit my own Inclinations, and resign them up to the power which my Friends have over me. Perhaps the voice of the People in this Respect may be the voice of God.

Had I design'd to present the World with a Discourse relating to this great Event, I think I should have chosen a different Text, and taken much more time in the Composition. But such as it is, I must now commit it to the Candor of my Readers; and humbly ask of God to bless my first Essay of this Kind to the service of the Souls of Men, that in all Occurrences they may learn first to pay a religious veneration to the hand of God the supreme and eternal King, and then that they may give all due Honour to the memory of our deceased Royal Benefactors, and may yield all affectionate duty and submission to those whom the kind providence of God has been long preparing for the Throne, and has now exalted to that sublime Dignity and important Station. May Divine Wisdom and Mercy ever guide and defend them! May the Almighty God pour out his richest Blessings on their Royal Persons and their Issue in a long and glorious Succession, and render them the Guards and Honours of Christianity and Great Britain so long as the Sun and Moon endure! Amen.

June 23^d.

1727.



A SER-

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SERMON, &c.

THE solemn and important Occurrences of the last Week call us to a serious Notice of the Hand of God in them: The Death of our late Gracious Sovereign, and the happy Accession of his present Majesty, have diverted my Thoughts from the Subject which I lately proposed, and have determined me to entertain you this Day with the Words of the holy Prophet

ISAIAH V. 12.

And the Harp and the Viol, the Tabret and Pipe, and Wine are in their Feasts: but they regard not the Work of the Lord, neither consider the Operation of his Hands.

IN the Reigns of several of our former Princes we had a just and melancholy Apprehension of *Popish* Darkness and Tyranny breaking in upon us at their Death. The peaceful and regular Succession of a *Protestant* Heir to his Father's Throne, is such a Blessing as hath not been known in
Great

Great Britain for a hundred Years past * : It might well be expected then that it should be received with universal Joy and Gladness of Heart. The occasion for it is proper and glorious : Nor will I censure the moderate use of a Feast, and a Song, and Instruments of Musick, to express this inward and becoming Joy : Nor doth the Prophet in my Text forbid them as unlawful Things ; but he gives it as the Character of the prophane Part of Mankind, that upon all Occasions they give up themselves to sensual Merriment, with an utter neglect of the Providence of God.

In such Events as we behold this Day, the Man of Wisdom and Piety looks all around him : he takes a religious Notice of the Death of a preceding Prince, which makes way for the Introduction of his Successor, and he points his Eye to the Hand of God in the sudden change of our Rulers. The true Christian assumes the Language of the Prophet *Daniel* with a devout Temper of Mind, *Blessed be the Name of God for ever, for Wisdom and Might are his : He changeth the Times and the Seasons, he removeth Kings, and he setteth up Kings*, *Daniel* ii. 21. Whereas the formal Professors of Christia-

* The last Instance of this kind was when *Charles* the Ist. succeeded his Father *James* the Ist. in the Year 1625. and indeed this was the only one, except when *Edward* the VIth came to the Crown in the room of *Henry* the VIIIth his Father.

nlty, or the vicious part of the People, shew their Mirth by *enslaming themselves with strong Drink ; and the Harp and the Violare in their Feasts, but they regard not the Work of the Lord, nor consider the Operation of his Hands.* This is the Crime which the Prophet severely reproveth, and for which he pronounces divine Threatnings in the following Verses.

To make a right improvement of the present Providence, and the Text, I shall enquire,

- I. What sort of Notice we ought to take of the Dispensations of God, and especially in the Affairs of Nations.
- II. I shall consider, What is the Guilt and Danger of disregarding the Hand of God herein.
- III. I will apply these Things particularly to the present Events in our Nation.

First, *What sort of Notice ought we to take of the Dispensations of God?* I answer briefly under three general Heads.

1. *We should make a solemn observation of what is awful and afflictive in the Events of Divine Providence, and learn some instructive Lessons thereby.* If the Life of a Sparrow be the Object of Divine Superintendency, *if a Sparrow fall not to the Ground without our heavenly Father,* much more should we direct our Thoughts to the Operation

ration and Influence of God in the greater Incidents of the Life and Death of Man, and the important Changes that depend upon them. *When the Judgments of God are abroad in the Earth, the Inhabitants of the World will learn Righteousness, or at least they ought to do it, Isaiah xxvi. 8, 9. Is there any Evil in the City, any Sorrow attends a Nation, but the Lord hath a hand in it? Amos iii. 6. The voice of the Lord hath spoken, and the Man of Wisdom will see his Name, will hear the Rod and him that hath appointed it, Micah vi. 9.* The Man of Religion will enquire, “ What have “ I done to provoke the Almighty to send “ down his Judgments from Heaven? What “ abuse of Mercies have I been guilty of, to “ provoke the great God to remove them “ from me? What share have I had in the “ common guilt of a Nation, that may have “ awakened the Anger of God against it in “ any instances of publick Sorrow?

2. *We should raise our Hearts to a delightful notice and a grateful sense of the Mercy of God in his Providences.* The Business of Religion is not all sadness and mourning. We are bound to take notice of publick Joys, as well as of common and extensive Calamities. A Christian may rejoice in the Light of Heaven and the Sun-beams, as well as observe the Clouds, and Thunder and Storms; but he must remember they all
come

come from above. The wicked of the Earth make themselves merry amidst the Comforts of Life without any Notice of the God that gives them, or any Thank-offerings to his Name: But a sincere Christian loves to receive his Blessings from the Hand of his heavenly Father: He looks on them as the distributions of Divine Love, he beholds them sanctify'd by the Covenant of rich Grace, and thereby he tastes a double relish of Sweetness in them. Common and publick Blessings afford him a private and delicious Sensation beyond what the thoughtless Herd of Mankind partake of: *The Stranger intermeddles not with this Joy.* When he drinks of the sweet Streams of Delight here on Earth, he traces them to the Fountain Head in Heaven, and as it were bathes himself in the immense Ocean of Goodness. "This God is my God, my heavenly Friend, and he will be my God for ever and ever."

3. *We should make a humble enquiry into the various Duties, both toward God and Man, which Divine Providence calls us to at special Seasons, and under special Circumstances.* It is the Language of a Soul that walks with God, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" There is not a Day nor an Hour but brings a Duty with it; not a change of Providence but calls for peculiar Practices of Piety.

We are placed here in a State of Service, and God requires that our Eye be directed to him hourly, *as the Eye of a Servant to his Master, or a Handmaid to her Mistress*; so speaks the Royal Psalmist, Psalm cxxiii. 2. We should watch every motion of the right Hand of our God, and all the progress of his Footsteps in his Government of the World, that we may learn our proper Business thence; that *in the time of prosperity we may rejoyce in the Lord, and in the hour of adversity we may set our selves to consider our Ways and humble our selves before him*. 'Tis the Word of God that appoints us the general Rules of Duty and Religion; but 'tis Providence that leads us to apply these Rules, and to put them into daily Practice.

Thus having enquired what sort of Notice a Christian ought to take of the Hand of God in the Events of Life, we proceed to shew in the second Place, *what is the Guilt and Danger of neglecting this pious Practice*: And that may be comprized chiefly under the four following Heads.

1. Those who take no notice of the Operations of God in the Affairs of human Life, *abuse their Reason and their better Powers, both as Men and as Christians*. Our Eyes and our Ears and other Senses of the Body are given us to take Notice of the outward Objects that surround us which are the Springs

Springs of Pain or Pleasure ; and these we enjoy in common with the Beasts of the Earth : The Birds and the Fishes, the creeping Things, and every little Insect employ their corporeal Powers for the same Purposes ; but Man was made with nobler Principles, and capacitated to discover and discern the Hand of God his Creator, and to observe his supreme Direction of all the Affairs of Mankind : and if we consider ourselves as Christians, we profess still a diviner Principle of converse with God. How mean, how ignoble and degenerate a thing is it then, for Men who profess Christianity, to look no further than the Objects of Sense, and sink themselves to the rank of the brute Creation ? Man, tho' he be raised by the station of his Nature, to a more honourable Character than the rest of the Animals ; yet if he remain *without understanding*, and thoughtless of his God, *he becomes like the Beasts that perish : Brute Beasts*, which (as the Apostle says) *are made to be destroy'd*, 2 Peter ii. 12. So Men that *regard not the Operation of the Lord, nor consider the Work of his Hands, the Lord will destroy them and not build them up*. Psalm xxviii. 5.

2. Those who disregard the Work of God in the Events of human Life, *they deprive the great God himself of that Honour which he demands and expects, especially from his more important Providences*. Doth not his

sublime Wisdom, his extensive Goodness, and his Almighty Power, display themselves gloriously in his providential Government of Mankind? and is it not with this Design, that his intelligent Creature Man should take notice of this display of his Glories? To what purpose are all the manifestations of his Mercy and of his Judgment among Men, if the Sons of *Adam* disregard them all? Will not the supreme Governor of the World resent such a stupid and sottish Conduct? Does the great God write his own Name in every Leaf of his two great Volumes of Nature and Providence, and shall his Creature *Man* take no notice of it, and refuse to read it? Will he for ever bear with Creatures that neglect to take notice of the Name and Works of their Almighty Maker?

3. *They bereave themselves of the rich Advantages that may be derived from such converse with God about the Events of human Life.* If we were but wise and curious Observers of the conduct of Providence, what divine Experiments might we obtain of the Wisdom and of the Grace of God? and lay up a Treasure of sweet and solid Foundations for Encouragement and hope in Days to come? The Royal Psalmist assures us of blessed Advantages to be derived from a skilful notice of divine Providences, *Psalms cvii. 43. Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the*

the Loving Kindness of the Lord. They who learn to know his Name, by a wise attendance to his Works, will put their trust in him.

If we overlook the Hand of the Almighty in the Events of human Life, we lose much of the spiritual profit of awful and afflictive Providences, and much of the sweetness of temporal Mercies. Such a sinful neglect will also lead us by degrees to a woful omission of our daily Duties, and bring us into great danger of degeneracy and backsliding, into a carnal and worldly frame of Spirit: Whereas if we make it our business to watch the Hand of God in the Occurrences of the World, this is indeed living by Faith, *as seeing him that is invisible*; and we are much better prepared by such a converse with God on Earth for a more intimate blessed converse with him in the World of sight and enjoyment.

4. Those who regard not the Works of the Lord *provoke him to deprive them of all the Blessings of Life, and to abandon them to utter Ruin.* How can they ever hope that the Lord will bestow repeated Mercies upon them, when they take no notice of his Power and his Hand in the Blessings they have already received? How can they expect to enjoy the continuance of present Comforts? *Israel did not know that I gave them Corn, and Wine, and Oyl, therefore I will return*

return and take away my Corn in the Season thereof, and my Wine in its Season, and I will recover my Wool which was given to cover their Nakedness, Hosea ii. 8, 9. If this be our practice, we may justly expect to be left of God, and bereav'd of the Mercies that relate to this Life and the Life to come. If we like not to retain God in our Knowledge, and to glorify him as God, we may justly fear to be given up to a reprobate mind and to final Destruction. Let such stupid and regardless Sinners read the threatenings of the Lord against such brutish People in the Words that follow my Text. Therefore my People shall go into Captivity because they have no Knowledge; their honourable Men are famished, and their Multitude dry'd up with Thirst: Therefore Hell hath enlarged it self, and open'd its Mouth without measure, and their Glory and their Multitude and their Pomp, and he that rejoiceth shall descend into it. A just Vengeance on such Impiety!

I proceed now to the *third general Head* which I propos'd, and that is to *apply the sense of my Text to the particular Event of the last Week.* And I shall divide the Circumstances of this great Event, *viz.* the Death of one King and the Succession of another, together with the Notices we should take of it, under the three particulars before mentioned, *viz.* We are called

to consider what there is in it of an awful and afflictive Kind, what blessed mixtures of Mercy attend the afflictive Providence, and what are our present Duties, both to God and Man, which are derived thence.

I. Let us consider *what there is in this Providence that is awful and afflictive*, and what *Lessons of serious Instruction we may draw from it.*

1. Here is the Death of one of the greatest Men upon Earth: A King whose Dominion was spread from Sea to Sea, and who reigned over several Nations: A Prince who held the Balance of *Europe*, and determined the Superiority to which Side soever he inclined: One that was Arbitrer of Peace and War among the Potentates of the World. Yet behold he is subject to Mortality and the common stroke of Death, *Psalm lxxxii. 6, 7. I have said ye are Gods*, because the Power of Magistrates bears some resemblance to that of the God of Heaven: Therefore they are called *the Children of the most High; but they must die like other Men. 'Tis the hand of the Lord hath wrought this, in whose hand is the Soul of every living thing, and the Breath of all Mankind, Job xii. 9.*

The Lesson that we derive from this view of Things, is, to take heed lest we depend too much on the Life of the best of Princes. Tho' we derive many Blessings thro' their Influence, yet we must remember they are not

not immortal. Let God alone be the solid and everlasting Rest and Refuge of our Souls, whose Life is Eternity, whose Kingdom reigns over all, and his Dominion is for ever and ever. *Psalm cxlvi. 3, 4, 5. Put not your trust in Princes, nor in the Son of Man, in whom there is no help; his Breath goeth forth, he returneth to his Earth, in that very day his Thoughts perish,* and all our dependences are vain and frustrate. *Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is the Lord his God, who made Heaven, and Earth, and Sea, and keepeth the Truth for ever. Esa. ii. ult. Cease ye from Man whose Breath is in his Nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of? God alone is our immortal Hope.*

2. We may remark in this Event, the sudden Death of this great Man in a Journey to his native Land. He set out from his Palace in *Great Britain* in a state of Health and Vigor, with a firm Constitution and Strength above the proportion of his Years: but e're he arrived at the place which he design'd, he was smitten with a mortal Faintness, and hurried away from the Earth in an unexpected Hour: He was arrested in his Journey by a fatal Messenger from the King of Kings, a Messenger whose Name is *Death*, and whose Commission admits of no delay; a Messenger who lays his cold Hand on Princes, and bears them away resistless thro'

the midst of their Guards, to their long home, and the unseen World. Vain was the skill of Physicians in that mournful Hour; the zeal and fondness of a Brother's Love was vain. He arriv'd at the Palace of *Osnabrug*, the Habitation of his dearest Brother, and only gave him the sad opportunity to see a dying Monarch, and take his last long leave of so near and so desirable a Relative.

What Lesson shall we learn now from the suddenness of this great Event, but to *awaken our own Souls to a constant readiness for a removal*. Be ye always ready, says our blessed Lord, *for ye know not when ye shall be called, whether at Even or at Midnight, or when the Cock crows in the Morning*: Whether we shall be summon'd away at once from our own Homes, or when we are travelling in distant Lands. Let us remember we are still Borderers on the Grave and the eternal World, and we are always within a Moment's reach of the invisible State and the Region of Spirits. 'Tis but the Wink of an Eye, the Cessation of the Pulse, the Stoppage of our Breath, and we are gone beyond the Power of Medicines, and the Art of Man to recall us. Who wou'd venture upon a Journey without having his Soul insured in the Hands of *Jesus* the Saviour?

There is another Reflexion that we may derive from this Circumstance of the Death

of our late Sovereign, and that is, How often have we our selves been preserved in Journeys, when our gracious Monarch died in the midst of his Travels? How have we left our Habitations in peace, visited our Friends in distant parts, and returned to our Dwellings in peace again? But this great Man was cut off on a sudden, before he reach'd the Place design'd? How often have our Friends gone forth from the midst of us, and been brought back with Safety and Joy? our King went from us and returns no more; here's the Sovereignty of Divine Providence; here's the interposing Will of the Almighty. Let us remember then to take the Will and Providence of the great God into our Consultations, *when we say, To Day, or to Morrow, we will go into such a City, and continue there a Season and return again; whereas we know not what shall be on the Morrow: What is your Life, 'tis even a Vapour that appears for a little time and then vanishes away; we ought therefore to say, If the Lord will, we shall live and do this or that,* according to our purpose, *Jam. iv. 14.*

3. Let us remember that this great Event carries in it the *appearance of a huge Affliction* to Great Britain, for 'tis the Death of a King whose happy Accession was a glorious Deliverance of our Nation from Slavery, and a Defence of our Religion from
Popish

Popish Superstition, Tyranny, and Blood: We have lost a great and glorious Benefactor, under whose Government we had enjoy'd the Blessings of Peace and Plenty for so many Years together. At his Accession to the Crown he scattered our Fears, and fill'd every Soul with Gladness: He crush'd a dangerous Rebellion in our Land in the beginning of his Reign; and by the Wisdom of his Counsels at home, and the Terror of his Arms abroad, he maintain'd Peace among the Nations. This is he concerning whom we were ready to say, that *we shall sit many Tears under his Shadow* in our native *Land*, enjoying the comforts of Life, and the privileges of the House of God: But he is smitten, his Life is vanish'd, and he is gone from the Earth: Our Deliverer and our Guardian is removed from the midst of us, he will deliver and defend us no more.

The *Lesson* of Instruction which we derive hence is this, *The great God doth not stand in need of the greatest of Men to carry on his own Work.* O! the divine Magnificence of the Government of God, who can prepare and qualify Instruments for his own Service, and employ them for a Season for blessed Purposes, and lay them aside again at pleasure, without the least Interruption to his important Designs! If the blessed God had stood in need of a Man, for the

support of his Interest in the World, and for the guard of our Nation, one wou'd be ready to say, Surely our gracious departed Sovereign wou'd have been continued in the midst of us, and wou'd have been preserved yet many Years on the *British* Throne. But *the Lord seeth not as Man sees: his Thoughts are above our Thoughts, and his Ways are above ours, as the Heavens are above the Earth.* He hath seen fit to cut short the Life of our King, the Guardian of our Liberties, and the Defender of our Faith, and yet we trust he intends to save *Great Britain*, and to preserve his Churches in the midst of her: He can do it while King GEORGE our Deliverer lies asleep in the Dust and Silence.

4. When we consider the many personal Excellencies and Royal Virtues that adorned the Character of our late Sovereign, 'tis an awful and afflictive thing to think of so much Excellency removed from the Earth. The World is bereav'd of one of the best of Princes. Should we take a survey of his excellent Qualifications for Government, it wou'd entertain us beyond the measure of our present Time; but in gratitude to the memory of such a Prince, and to awaken a due Sense of our Loss, we cannot pass away to the next Head, without the short mention of a few of these Royal Virtues.

(1.) He

(1.) He was a Prince of a wise Heart, and excellent in Counsel; Sagacious to foresee threatening Dangers at a distance, and to penetrate into future Events, as far as human foresight is permitted to do it. Consummate Wisdom makes an approach to a prophetick Spirit. How just and happy were his Sentiments of the tendency of things in the former Reign? How true his Presages? and how dreadful had the final Event been, if a merciful Providence had not brought him to the Throne, to prevent the Dangers which he foresaw? With how successful a Penetration did he enter into the Projects of Foreign Princes, and by a prudent Precaution guard us from the mischievous Influence of them? *Great Britain*, and the Nations in Alliance therewith, find the present happy Effects of his Wisdom in this respect.

(2.) He was a Prince of great firmness of Soul; his Heart was all Courage; Resolution and a steady Conduct ran thro' the whole of his Affairs: And in many instances those that were near the Throne have observed a remarkable constancy of Spirit in his Government, the happy Effects whereof have been very discernable to those at a greater distance. We have had no weak, fickle Management, and changing Scenes of Things since he wore the Crown: This made him the more beloved by his Friends,

Friends, and his Enemies stood the more in Awe of him.

3. Mercy, Goodness, and Love were wrought into his very Constitution; they discovered themselves even to the Eyes of Strangers, in the very features of his Countenance: Every one that saw his Face, declared they saw the evident traces and signatures of Benignity and Goodness there: And these Virtues shone so much the brighter, by how much the higher station they were placed in. Gentleness and Love to Mankind, and friendly Benevolence, are excellent Dispositions in any Man; but when they are join'd with Majesty, they imitate the Glories of God himself, and carry an illustrious resemblance of our Maker. The Death of such a Sovereign, who sat on the Throne with Meekness, and Love, and Compassion attending on each side of him, is a great and heavy Loss to a free-born Nation.

4. He was a Prince without Pride. His whole Conduct made it appear, that he regarded the good of his Subjects more than his own Grandeur. He seemed to have no superior Airs about him; no supercilious Looks; but was affable in his whole Deportment towards those who were so much beneath him. He had nothing of that restless and mischievous Quality of Ambition, that takes every Opportunity to grasp at
more

more Power, and to seize on the ancient Rights and the Freedoms even of a Loyal and obedient People. The Happiness of his Subjects seemed to be his constant Wish and his highest Joy.

5. He was a Prince who delighted to reward his Friends, and wou'd never forget past Services: Of this we are Witnesses in a special manner who worship God according to our Consciences in a way somewhat different from the national Establishment: he knew the heartiness of our Zeal for the Protestant Succession, and our activity for his Interest according to our limited and narrow Powers before he yet arrived at the Throne; and the Repeal of some hard and severe Laws which stood in force against us, and the encrease of our Liberties, must be ascribed in some measure to this generous Principle which reigned in the Heart of our deceased Sovereign. And it must be said to the immortal Honour of King GEORGE, that this is no very common Character among the Princes of the Earth.

6. Among his other excellent Dispositions it ought never to be forgotten that he had the common welfare of *Protestants* much at Heart, and upon every Occasion interpos'd in their behalf. He could not bear to see his Brethren in the profession of the same Faith, ill treated by *Popish* Princes,

and unjustly burden'd by the persecuting Powers of this World. He knew Conscience was a sacred thing, and that the Empire of it belong'd only to God; and as he would not assume a Power over it at home, nor impose Yokes of Bondage on any of his Subjects, so neither was he patient to see this Antichristian Spirit prevail over Mankind abroad, wheresoever it was possible for him to procure a redress of such Grievances. His own Counsels, his wise Orders to his Ministers, and his Royal Letters to foreign Princes bear a glorious Witness to this part of his Character.

It must be told also to the immortal Honour of his Name and Memory with what Zeal he sought the Union of Protestants among themselves. How readily he employ'd his good Offices, to relax the Bonds of Imposition and Severity in some of the *reformed* Cantons of *Switzerland*, that Conscience might have a larger Liberty in the Modes of professing the same Faith and Worship. Surely the Man who labour'd so gloriously to procure this Freedom for Christians abroad, must be influenced by higher Views than those which are merely Political, to maintain and promote a just Liberty of Conscience among his own Subjects.

To conclude, he was a Prince who sought to oblige all that he had to do with and to make
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make them easy and happy ; but for those who would not be wrought upon by the condescensions of his Love, he knew how to keep them in Subjection. The Church of God in the World, the Protestant Kingdoms, and the Nation of *Great Britain* have sustain'd a great and certain Loss, when such a Governour, such a Benefactor, such an extensive Blessing is taken from the Earth.

II. We proceed now to the second Thing remarkable in the late Event of Providence, and that is to consider *what Mercies are mingled with this awful Dispensation, that we may raise our Souls to a delightful and grateful sense of them.*

I. That a Prince of so many excellent Qualifications reigned so long over us, and that we enjoyed the Blessing of his wise and peaceful Government for such a number of Years.

And here it becomes us on this Occasion to call to mind the former Years of our Distress and Danger, and the surprizing Pleasure of our first Deliverance. Blessed be the Name of our God that he raised up such a Successor to the *British* Throne, such a Defender of the Faith ; such a glorious Deliverer of the Nation from the imminent Perils under which we lay, wherein Property and Religion, Liberty and Life were all exposed. Blessed be the Hand of

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our God that interposed in so signal a Season, and confounded all the Devices of our Enemies; He blasted their presumptuous Hopes at once, and overwhelm'd them with a huge and fatal Disappointment: *The Snare was broken and we escaped*; the *Protestant* Succession obtained, and King GEORGE was raised to his appointed Throne, and all that is dear to us was rescued from the Hands of Popish Tyranny, which was ready to invade us.

Let us recollect with pleasure the mercy of our God who inspired his Predecessor King *William* of glorious Memory to lay the Foundation of the *Protestant* Succession to the Crown of these Kingdoms: Then he prepared a healing Balm for the Wound which we received at the Death of our late Sovereign, and made a happy Provision against a thousand distant Dangers.

Let us give Glory to our God who prolonged the Life of our late King, and made him the Author of numerous Blessings for almost thirteen Years together: A large space of the Life of Man, wherein we enjoyed our civil Properties in Peace, and our religious Privileges were confirmed to us by the constant Favour of our Prince! Tho' in the beginning of his Reign, the Enemy made their utmost Efforts against us by lifting up Axes and Hammers against our Places
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of Worship, because of our inviolable attachment to his interest, yet his wife and steady Conduct soon suppress'd those Riots, and the Law secured us against future Fears.

2. It must be acknowledged as an instance of Divine Mercy, that our King was not taken from the Earth by the Hands of Violence. A bloody Death had been a much more formidable Appearance. This would have fill'd our Hearts with dismay, lest a secret Train of Mischiefs should have been contrived and broken out to our great Confusion. Blessed be the Name of our God that guarded his precious Life from Day to Day, and continued him to a good old Age, tho' he had such a multitude of Enemies on Earth and in Hell. The Agents of *Rome* are never wanting to contrive the Destruction of all those that support what they call the *Northern Heresy*, and the Powers of Darkness are engaged on their Side. Yet this great Man came to his Grave in Peace, and died as *David* did, at a comfortable length of Years, *full of Days, Riches and Honour*.

3. 'Tis to be reckoned among our Mercies, since he lived so long as to see the Seeds of Discord sown among the Nations in *Europe*, and the first Efforts of a War in *Spain*, that he lived also long enough to lay the Foundations of an extensive Peace.

'Tis worthy of our notice that the Empress of *Muscovy*, who was known to be in a contrary Interest, died but a few Weeks ago, whereby 'tis supposed some of the Foreign Potentates were more powerfully and speedily induced to accept the Preliminaries of a Treaty of Peace. Blessed be the God of Peace that our Sovereign lived to see these Preliminaries sign'd: Had he been taken off from the Stage of Action but a few Weeks sooner, perhaps the Peace and the Treaty had been greatly retarded, and our Enemies might have prosecuted the War with double Vigour. Times and Seasons, Life and Death are in the Hands of God, and we have often seen that he hath mark'd out and limited the Extent of the Life of Princes, to answer wise Purposes in his own Government of the World, and his gracious Designs towards *Great Britain* and the Churches of *Christ*.

4. 'Tis an instance of Divine Mercy beyond all Expression that we have such an Illustrious Prince for a Successor: One who is not only a firm *Protestant* by the influence of his Education under such a Father, but from his own Knowledge and Choice infinitely prefers the *Reformed* Religion, and is a constant Professor of it.

Blessed art thou, O *Britain*, for *thy King* is the Son of Nobles, descended from a Race

Racẽ of Sovereign Princes ; trained up from his youngest Years to the sublime Art of Government. Nor do we come under the *Woe* pronounced upon *the Land, whose King is a Child*, a Minor under Age, that wants a Ruler to be set over him. Our present Sovereign hath attained to a sufficient number of Years, and a large Share of Experience of human Affairs, and has made wise Observations of the various Occurrences among States and Nations, that he may sway the Sceptre of our Land with greater Prudence and Success.

'Tis to be numbred also among our Mercies, that King *GEORGE the Second* is no Stranger to our Nation, having lived many Years in the midst of us, and in this he hath a rich Advantage beyond his immediate Predecessor. Now if our late excellent Monarch, who was at first so much a Stranger to us, became thro' the Mercy of our God so wise and happy a Ruler, how hopeful a Prospect may we have of the present and future Government under the Administration of his Royal Son and Successor who has studied our Laws, has given Diligence to understand the Customs of the Land, and acknowledges the Excellency of our Constitution.

How happy are we in a Prince who has profess'd in his Royal Declaration, that *our Laws,*

Laws, our Liberties and Religion are most dear to him: and whose Affection to his People is so conspicuous, that he hath gained the Hearts of some of his Subjects, who could scarce conceal their Enmity to his Predecessor.

Nor should I be just to my Text on this occasion, if I should not take notice of that religious Sense which our present Sovereign hath express'd many Years ago, of the interposing Providence of God in counterworking all the mischievous Devices of *Rome* and Hell, and bringing the *Protestant Succession* in the Illustrious House of *Brunswick* to take effect in the Person of his Royal Father *. He is not one of those that attribute the Revolution of Kingdoms to Chance, but he regards the Work of the Lord therein, and the Operation of his Hands.

5. It should be added to the Rank of our Mercies also in this Event of Providence, that the King succeeds to the Throne of his Father in so much Tranquillity and Peace. No Tumults nor Insurrections, no rising Sedition, no clashing of Arms. The rebellious Party are discouraged and broken, their Hearts sink within them, and their Men of Might have not found their Hands:

* See Mr. *Derham's* Dedication of his *Astro-Theology*.

We trust their number is greatly diminished, and will decrease continually. *George the Second* succeeds to the *British* Throne with so general a Satisfaction and Applause, that we hope it will shortly become universal. May the God of Heaven fulfil our hopes!

6. 'Tis a very remarkable part of our Joy, that we are also blest with a *Queen* of an excellent Character, and a Spirit of uncommon Goodness. One who hath been trained up not only to practise Religion, but to understand it too. One who hath not wasted her Life in the Gaieties and Softnesses of a Court, but hath pursued solid Knowledge in the Things of Nature, and the Affairs of Morality: One who hath learnt the Rules of Virtue sufficient to teach them as a Science, but who teaches them with more Honour and Success by her own daily Practice; and is not diverted by the splendid Temptations of a Palace from the richer Improvements of the Mind.

Blessed be God for a *British* Queen who hath shewn such a sincere Zeal and Love to the Protestant Religion, as to refuse the Imperial Crown of *Germany*, lest she should be intangled or defiled with *Popish* Superstition; and who takes a peculiar Pleasure to train up her Royal Offspring in all the Paths of Virtue and Piety. May Divine Mercy succeed her Care! She

She is a Princess whom we hope the Providence of God hath raised up to the Royal Dignity, that she may become a more powerful and extensive Pattern of every Virtue and every Grace, and may help to correct the Manners of the Nation, and the degenerate Customs of the Times by her illustrious Example.

7. Among the Blessings of this Day we must not forget the numerous Race of young Princes which, we trust, are born to secure and perpetuate our Happiness. Children in a more general sense are the *Blessing of the Lord*; but a numerous Progeny in a Royal House, who shall be all trained up in the *Protestant* Faith, are a peculiar Favour of Heaven to *Great Britain*. What a happy Prospect is it, that our late Sovereign left such a large Posterity behind him! Had his Life been single, or like that of King *William*, not blest with Royal Issue, how dreadful would our present case have been? In what Dangers and Contests had he left the Succession to his Throne? And our Nation might have felt the fatal Effects of it, groaning under *Popish* Darkness, and wallowing in Blood.

Who can review such a multitude of Mercies as these are, but must have his Heart fill'd with Joy and Thankfulness to God the Ruler of the World? And how happily are
our

our deepest Sorrows for the Death of our late King alleviated by such a view of Blessings in a glorious Succession? Blessings for present and future Ages!

I am come now to the last general Head of my Discourse, and that is a *humble enquiry into the various Duties that naturally arise from the present Event*: Most of them may be summed up under the following Particulars.

1. *A proper and becoming Sense of our Loss.* Shall so great a Prince be taken away from this Earth, and so valuable a Blessing from our Nation, without an awful and solemn Sense of the Hand of God? Tho' he had arrived at the Age of sixty seven Years, which is almost the Term of the Life of Man, yet the Vigour of his Constitution, and his healthy Frame of Nature, seemed to promise us several more Years of Protection and Peace under his Government: But the All-wise God hath cut off the Thread of his valuable Life, and disappointed our Hopes. And while we stand in awe, and adore the sovereign Hand of Providence, that hath deprived us of so excellent a Prince, it becomes us to pay all due Honours to his Memory, even tho' his Throne be supply'd with so excellent a Successor. All *Israel mourned thirty Days* for Moses their Leader in the *Plains of Moab*, tho' they had a *Joshua*

to succeed him, who was *full of the Spirit of Wisdom*, Deut. xxxiv. 8, 9.

2. Such a Providence as this *should shake us off from our dependence on any Creatures*, and fix our Hope more entirely on God: He only is the *King Eternal, Immortal, and Invisible*. He is the *King of Kings*, who disposes of their Breath, and their Sceptre, and their Dominions as he pleases; but he *reigns for ever and ever, and his Kingdom stands to all Generations*. This Duty was hinted before: I add therefore,

As *Christians*, it becomes us on such Occasions to remember *Jesus the Son of God*, whose Title also is *the Lord of Lords, and the King of Kings*: Into his Hands are committed all the reins of Government in the upper and the lower Worlds. *He hath the Keys of Death and the Grave*. In his Hand is the Life of Princes; they reign but under him, and according to his Pleasure. He numbers the Days of their Life, and the Years of their Dominion; and he dismisses them from this World when they have finished the Work to which he ordained them, and raises up others in their stead, to carry on his own and his Father's wise and eternal Scheme of Councils. *He is the same Yesterday, to Day, and for ever; and of his Kingdom there is no End*. Tho' he be the *Child that was born of the*

the Virgin, *the Son* that was promised to *Abraham*, and *given* in Mercy to the World, yet he is also the *mighty God*, the *everlasting Father*, and the *Prince of Peace*, *Isaiah* ix. 6. Let our Eye be directed to him. Let us live upon him as the *King of Saints*, and *the King of Nations*. And amidst all the Changes and Revolutions of this lower World, let us remember that *Sion* is still safe under the Eye and Care of *Jesus* her King.

3. Let us manifest our gratitude to God for these great and important Blessings which are mingled with the present awful Event, and let our thankfulness be express'd in such a manner as becomes the Professors of Piety and strict Religion. 'Tis God that has ordained all things so well for us in this Nation, who established the Protestant Succession at first, and hath made it to take effect once and again: 'Tis he hath plac'd all things in so happy a situation to dry up our Tears, and to allay our Sorrows. To him be a thousand Thanks and Honours offered by the Nation and all the Churches.

And in order to manifest our thankfulness in a more eminent degree, let us enquire wherein we have misimproved the Peace, Liberty, and other numerous Blessings of the former Reign, and awaken our selves to all holy diligence in a wise im-

provement of our present Mercies. O! let us not indulge Riot, Luxury, and Vanity, nor waste the Blessings of Heaven in the follies and iniquities of Life. Let us not practise the Crimes which my Text severely reproves, nor indulge sensual merriment with the neglect of God and Religion: But as temporal Mercies surround us in a sweet Succession, let our Love to God our supreme Benefactor be perpetually increased, and our Duties of Piety be ever multiplied.

4. That Divine Providence which has called our present Monarch to the Throne, *demands all dutiful Affection and Obedience to be paid him with our Hearts and Hands.* As we fear God, and love our Brethren, so let us honour the King, for these three Commands are joined together in the New Testament, 1 Pet. ii. 17. Reason and Scripture unite them all.

Let us submit our selves to him with all cheerfulness, as onewhom God has appointed to be the Guardian of our Religion, and our Liberties, and all that is dear to us. Let us ever speak of him with Honour, and not mention his Name without a becoming Respect. With a just impatience let us frown upon all Tale-bearers, and discourage every Whisperer, those secret and vile Instruments of publick mischief. Nor let us give countenance to sly and private insinuations
against

against the Dignity and Honour of our Sovereign.

Let us reverence and love him as one that is exalted to be *the Minister of God for our good*. 'Tis on him, under God, that our Eyes are fixed. 'Tis in him that our hopes of Happiness centre. Under *Christ Jesus*, who is the *Lord of Glory*, we must look upon *George the Second of Great Britain*, as the chief Guardian and Support of the Protestant Religion in the World.

5. *Let us offer our daily and ardent Prayers to God for his long Life, Prosperity and Peace.* Addresses to Heaven for the divine Presence with him, should be joined with all our Vows of Allegiance. We read in *Joshua i. 17*. That when the Tribes of *Reuben, Gad and Manasseh* surrender'd themselves to the Conduct of *Joshua* in the Room of *Moses*, they joyned a hearty Petition to the Lord for him; *According as we hearkned unto Moses in all Things, so will we hearken unto thee, and all that thou commandest us we will do: only the Lord thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses.*

When *Solomon* was placed on the Throne of his Father *David* before he died, *David* is supposed to write the *LXXII. Psalm*, which may be a proper Pattern for our present Petitions in this manner: As thou gavest our late

late King thy Judgments, O God, so give thy Righteousness to the King's Son: Let him judge thy People with Righteousness, and thy Poor with Judgment. Let him save the Children of the needy, and break in pieces the Oppressor: Let him come down like Rain upon the new mown Grass, as Showers that water the Earth: In his Days let the Righteous flourish, and abundance of Peace be derived from his Posterity so long as the Moon endureth; As his Dominions are extended from Sea to Sea, so let him have a spreading influence from the Rivers of Great Britain unto the Ends of the Earth; Let those that dwell in distant Lands, bow before him, and let his Enemies lick the Dust; Let him live and reign a length of Years, and all due Tribute be given him; Let Prayer be made for him continually, and may he be ever engaged in Works of Blessing to the World, that he may receive daily and perpetual Praises.

And as the Spirit of God eminently designed Solomon in this Psalm as a Type of Christ, so let us pray that our Sovereign may imitate our blessed Jesus in all Divine Virtues, and in the sacred Qualifications of a Ruler; that his Throne may be surrounded with Wisdom and established in Justice: In his Majesty let him ride prosperously with Truth, Meekness and Righteousness attending

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ing him; May every Princely Virtue and Grace dwell in his Heart and shine through all his Actions. May his Authority and his Royal Example joyn together to work Wonders of Reformation among the higher and the lower Ranks of Mankind: And may Probity of Manners be always a necessary step of Access to the King's Favour.

O may he be *wise as an Angel of God* to discern between Good and Evil, between his sincere Friends and fawning Flatterers! Grant, O Lord, that he may daily encrease in Sagacity and happy Penetration to discover the true Interest of the Land, and be ever steady and resolute in the pursuit of it. Let him see his own Interest inseparably connected with the Interest of his People, and pursue them together with glorious Success. May the *Protestant* Powers abroad acknowledge him as their common Father, and their superior Friend; and may even the distant Posterity of our Nation joyn with the Generations to come in Foreign Lands in paying Honour to his Memory, as the chief Support of Religion and Liberty in this lower World.

And since God hath blessed us with a *Queen Consort*, let her also have a large share in our best Wishes and our pious Addresses to Heaven. Long may she live a transcendent Blessing to the Nation and the
World;

World; and fulfill with Honour all the promising Prospects that her sublime Character and Virtue in a less exalted Station have given us. Let the Prophecy of *Isaiab* be eminently fulfill'd in our Day, that a *King* is become *our nursing Father* and a *Queen our nursing Mother*.

The various *Branches of the Royal Family* demand a share also in our Prayers; that plentiful Influences from Heaven may descend on them all, and that they may be train'd up under such Parents, for all the high Stations to which Providence may design them in future Times; that Blessings derived from the most serene Family of *Brunswick* may be diffused through the Nations of the Earth; and especially that the Heirs of the Crown descended from this Illustrious House may sit on the Throne of *Great Britain* in a long and perpetual Succession, may gloriously maintain Religion and Virtue in the Land, and promote the Kingdom of our blessed Redeemer from Age to Age till time shall be no more. *Amen.*



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